PRIDE (IN THE NAME OF FANDOM)

EDITOR'S BLURB by Joe Santulli

When I first got the idea to do an "all fans" fanzine, it seemed like a novelty. I just thought it would be "interesting" to see what our readers would come up with, and I expected to produce a four-page issue as a holiday special. Things started off slow: I didn't get even four pages' worth by the initial deadline, so I had to extend it. Well, it really paid off. When I returned from my honeymoon in late November, my mailbag was packed with articles, game reviews, and information for the "Write Digital Press" special.

No single issue I've produced to date has made me as proud to be a part of fandom as this one you're holding right now. If there ever was a potpourri of talent and wisdom, you're about to witness it. Check it out: our first "lifetime subscriber", Russ Perry Jr., kicks it off with a homage to this incredible hobby. Edward Villalpando and Al Backiel, personal friends and "experts" on videogaming lend their insights to the short-lived Supergrafx and Vectrex systems, respectively. Elsewhere in this issue, energetic reviews by Project: Ignition editor Jess Ragan, Jeff Cooper, and Rebecca Streets await you.
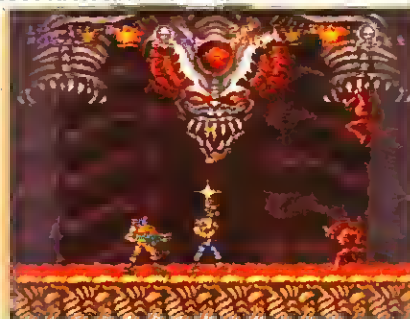
It's a killer issue, and I couldn't put everything I received into it. I guess that means we'll have to do a "Write Digital Press II". I love sequels. And now....

WHY VIDEOGAMES?

by Russ Perry Jr.

Humans possess many drives; two of these drives are a need to be entertained and the urge to compete. Mankind has, over the years, created many forms of activity meant to challenge and entertain, but why videogames?

Games are an intimate part of my culture, meant to test luck and/or skill. For the most part, these games involve play equipment to enact abstract realities, the way pieces and a board allow warfare to be represented, very simplistically, as chess. Games such as Risk bring more complexity to the rules, and the board becomes a map representing an actual location. Wargames go a step further, striving towards realism in the representation of war, but still, the map board is just a picture. And nothing really happens.

COMPUTER OPPONENTS: RUTHLESS AND UNFORGIVING

TV is the one invention that has had the largest effect on our culture in the past 50 years. TV brought the outside world into homes everywhere; sure, you could hear what was going on in the world with a radio, but it was just stories - with TV, it was irrefutable, because the pictures were there to see. Suddenly the world was just slightly smaller, and the other side of the country was next door.

Then computers, likely the invention with the most impact on our society in the last 50 years, came along.

In due time, computers used CRT's for displays, and in 1962 an MIT student, Steve Russell, created the first computer game, *Spacewar*, as a challenge to his prowess as a programmer, and an attempt to simulate a science fiction world.

Four years later, Ralph Baer began to wonder why the TV, found in so many homes, couldn't be used for more than just being turned on and off, and the course was set.

Computers are perfect for tasks like keeping track of rules, and with the proper display, any number of things can be simulated or represented. TV may have brought the world into our homes, but the computer can introduce entirely new worlds, worlds you can interact with. The line between fantasy and reality becomes more and more blurred with increases in graphics technology, and the progression from simple representation (game boards) to simulation becomes greatly exaggerated, causing the gaming experience to be far more believeable; after all, seeing is believing.

We have been trained to think that if we saw it on TV, it happened, even to the point of talking about cartoon characters as if they were real people, so it is hardly suprising how caught up in video games people can get.

In addition to bringing a new dimension to TV, videogames allowed true solitaire play. In the past, solitaire games tended to be either random (card solitaires) or "algorithmic" (peg solitaires and other puzzle-like diversions), but computers give the player an unseen opponent in addition to acting as host and referee in the game world, an opponent entirely ruthless and unforgiving.

Then there's the novelty of it all, seeing a formerly passive device respond to controller manipulations, and every year, the pictures just get better. Mankind always seeks to extend its play into the newest technology, while the initial novelty drives it into the culture, where business tries to keep it prosperous. Why videogames? Why not, it almost had to be. A better question: What next?

READER RETALIATION
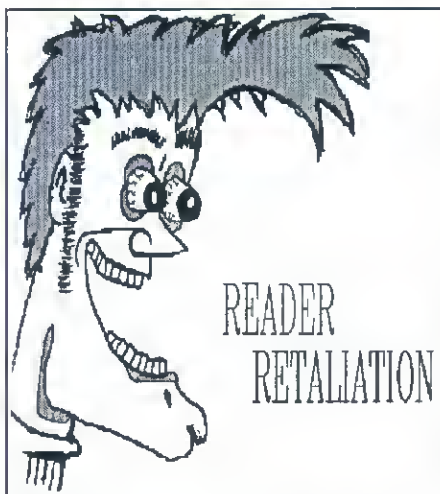
What's our take on this one? Well, we wrote letters to you, our reeders, and asked you to answer them for US. Here's what we got:

DESERT ISLAND

Dear Reader,
If you were stranded on a desert island and could keep one system and three games, what would they be? Remember that you will be stuck on this island for a long, long, time without even the slightest hope of rescue.

If I were to be stranded somwhere with only one system and 3 games, it would have to be Genesis with NHL Hockey '93, John Madden Football '93, and RBI Baseball 4. Although RBI 4 is the weakest of the three, it has three games built into one allowing for more extended play. I hope that if I were to be stranded it would be after Electronic Arts releases its two promised beseball games, so that I could take one of those instead of RBI 4. The reason I chose sports games is because they give me greater pleasure, greater flexibility, and to an extent, the games are never the same - compared to most other titles!

Nicholas P Masciotti
Bronx, NY

Vintage system - ColecoVision with Ladybug, Pepper II, and Mouse Trap (or Carnival). Current system - Turbografx-16 with Klax, Devil's Crush, and Dragon's Curse. Since the TG-16 offers more variety, I guess It would by my choice.

Lyann Glenn
Tacoma, WA

MOVIE TRANSLATIONS

Dear Reader,
There have been several attempts to translate hit movies into videogames, not always with great success (see: Back to the Future III). What movie, old or new, would you like to see made into a videogame? Describe some of the features you would want to see.

I don't like movies based on games. All too often manufacturers have tried to sell the cart on the basis of the license, not the gameplay. Take e look et DP's ultimete checklist. How many great games ere based on movies, TV shows, etc? Any? Sure, in theory, e great game can be based on a movie. But the game will be great beceuse of the play ection, not the title. When I go to the store and spot e cart based on a movie, an elarm goes off in my head: "Scroll and boss! Scroll and boss!" Usuelly the elarm is on target.

Jeff Cooper
Tulse, OK

Comments? Ouestions? Answers? Denials? Referrals? Keep those letters coming! Write: Digital Press Reader Retaliation, 44 Hunter Place, Pompton Lakes, NJ 07442.-2037

COLLECTOR'S CORNER

A PRICE GUIDE FOR COLLECTORS?
by Sean Kelly

One of the biggest problems I have as a classic game collector is knowing what to charge people that want to buy games from me. While myself and most of the collectors I know would rather trade games for something we don't have than sell them outright, it's not always possible, especially when videogame collecting is becoming more and more popular and new collectors with little or nothing to trade are looking for something from people that have several hundred carts.

Something that most collectors could benefit from is some sort of pricing guidelines possibly similar to all the different types of baseball card value books or magazines.

The range in price for almost any cartridge between the various sources for classic games is unreal! I have seen Atari 2600 *Home Run*, an extremely common title, for sale for as much as $22 and in contrast I have seen *Atari Video Cube*, an extremely rare cartridge, for as little as $4! The price for *Home Run* had to be based on nothing but greed, while the price for *Video Cube* was based simply on ignorance.

Something else that would happen as a result of blue-book is that all of our collections would then have a VALUE! Currently, nobody's collection has any real value to a non-collector because there is nothing to base it on other than the collector's personal opinion, but if there was a pricing guide, each and every one of our collections could have at least a base number.

Regardless of what the blue-book says, demand will always dictate the actual price. If you have, say, *Atari Video Cube* and I don't, I may be willing to pay 10 times more than what the blue-book value of the game is just because nobody else has a copy available for sale. On the same note, if you feel that the same game should sell for 10 times what the blue-book value of it is and a few other people have one for sale at the blue-book, yours would collect dust until you got your pricing in line.

In my opinion the "Press Release" I received from J.S.S. & Co. listing the three Atari 2600 collections for sale at around thirty grand each was an attempt to do just what I am talking about - assign a value to their collections. I can't imagine any of them expecting to sell their collections for that much money, but it did give them a value as well as the ability to (if they really wanted to sell their collections) offer them at a lower price, half-price for example, and tell the buyer that they are getting a good deal at the lower price. I am not saying that I think there is anything wrong with what they did - actually, I thought it was great, but not effective enough.

I think this is something that a lot of people have been thinking about, but nobody really knows for sure how to go about this including me. I do have some ideas to throw out at Digital Press readers, though. What we need to do is have one person or a group of persons collect "surveys" in a sense from any collector that wants to contribute to the effort declaring a value to all the cartridges they have. Once all of the surveys have been collected, an average price for each title would be calculated. Games such as prototypes or games that only one or two people own would be classified as priceless and the collectors would have to determine the value themselves. The final blue-book would then be available for minimal charge to cover postage and printing - probably about a buck or two.

EDITOR'S NOTE:
We've gotten several requests in the past two years to handle this issue, and began "Operation: Cash Cow" over a year ago. The process is quite time consuming, especially since the first step was to create a true listing of all classic carts (Operation: Checklist Central). We were satisfied that our listing was (for the most part) complete back in June, and have since been working hard at putting values on each of the games on the list. Several collectors have been requested to help us out

in this arduous task. Now, we can honestly say a price list is <u>nearly</u> available - however, there have been several other similar projects cropping up in the last few weeks, and we may benefit from gathering all of the information into one comprehensive source. If you're working on a similar project, you may want to get in touch with us. For anyone else who's interested, the Digital Press version of a "classic system price list" is just around the corner. Write us if you want to see an early prototype!

Checklist ✓ Central

COMPLETE SUPERGRAFX CHECKLIST
by Edward Villalpando

Introduced in late 1989, the NEC Supergrafx was supposed to be their answer to the Mega-Drive and the rumored Nintendo Super Famicom. With one game available at its introduction, people got bored pretty quick. But since the Supergrafx is compatible with all PC Engine games, you had a large library to choose from. Software developers seemed to have blacklisted the Supergrafx because it was yet another 8-bit product from NEC when there was a 16 and 32 bit machine rumored. Many mail order companies were claiming the

NEC'S SUPERGRAFX, CIRCA 1991

Supergrafx was 32-bit, because it had double the capabilities of the PC Engine. This is not true. It has more of a "true 16-bit feel" to it, while the Super Nintendo has more of an "8/16 bit feel" to it, 8-bit processing with 16-bit graphics. From what I can gather, here are the specs of the Supergrafx: 32K bytes RAM, 128K bytes video RAM, 4096 color palette, 128 onscreen sprites, 2 backgrounds. The audio is the same as the PC Engine.

Only five games were made specifically for the Supergrafx: *Battle Ace, Granzort: The Mountain King, Ghouls 'N Ghosts, Aldynes*, and *1941*. *Battle Ace* is a fast-paced shooter much like *After Burner* and *Galaxy Force*. *Granzort* is a follow-up to the Keith Courage series. *Ghouls 'N Ghosts* is better than the Genesis version, but it has 8 meg memory. More onscreen colors, more onscreen objects, plus animated backgrounds put this version on top. Audio, on the other hand, is not quite as good as Genesis. *Aldynes* could be called "king of the shooters". This game is HARD. Seven long levels, huge bosses, plus tons of onscreen objects make this game for experts only. There are unlimited continues, so good luck. You'll need it! *1941* is a game they said could not be done on Genesis or the Super Famicom. The moving objects on the screen have to be seen to be believed. Six levels with perfect difficulty tuning, big sub-bosses, and giant bosses make this game my favorite. Most Supergrafx games can be considered hard, even on the easiest setting. *Ghouls 'N Ghosts* does not have unlimited continues. This makes the Supergrafx the system for experts only. It's too bad the system didn't take off; it is much better than the PC Engine and would have made a good add-on to the US Turbografx-16. But since the system has officially been cancelled, with only five games to its credit, that makes the Supergrafx the most controversial system ever made.

[ ] 1941	NEC
[ ] Aldynes	NEC
[ ] Battle Ace	NEC

[ ] Darius Plus {P}	NEC
[ ] Ghouls 'N Ghosts	NEC
[ ] Granzort: The Mountain King	NEC

<u>KEY:</u>
{P}=Rumored to use PC Engine capabilities

RaNdOm rEvIɛW2

by DIGITAL PRESS FANS

Here's this installment's sampling of various games: old ones, new ones, it just doesn't matter. All games are rated on a scale of 1-10 in several categories, but remember that an 8 for an Atari 2600 game does not equal an 8 for a Neo-Geo game. All ratings are based on comparative software for that system. 'Nuff said!

KC'S KRAZY CHASE
NAP, FOR ODYSSEY2

ELEMENT	JR	JS	KY	BS	LN	KO	HH
GRAPHICS	8	8	-	-	7	-	-
SOUND	7	9	-	-	8	-	-
GAMEPLAY	9	7	-	-	7	-	-
OVERALL	8	8	-	-	7	-	-

As everyone knows, North American Phillips constantly capitalized on the science fiction fad so popular in the early 80's with the Odyssey2, which was invented for the task of sci-fi, almost robotic games. Many good ideas come from that, but it became a hindrance as well - look at *Quest for the Rings*, which was a simple RPG but still had the usual high-tech look so linked to the Odyssey2. Luckily, this doesn't damage *KC's Krazy Chase*, the talking sequel to the favorite muncher *KC Munchkin*. In fact, KC & his compatriots look quite well for the unusual style.

Other than *Pac-Man*, it's hard to compare this game to much of anything - except the Atari hit *Centipede*. In it, you are KC, a furry blue mouth with an appetite for a large centipede roaming the screen. Unfortunately, two evil fish swim menacingly in the maze, ready to bite your blue posterior when they get the opportunity. If either the fish or the centipede's head gets you, you go down with a rather clinical remark (usually in the vicinity of "Ouch! They got me!" in an early '80's, clear, well rehearsed announcer voice, nothing at all like the Gomer Pyle voice on the Intellivision game *B-17 Bomber*). However, eating the centipede frightens the fish, giving KC the chance to swallow them. Eat all of the centipede's sections and KC jovially laughs & returns to a new round.

The game is quite a bit of fun if you can get past the odd voices & the repetition. As with some Odyssey2 games, a new maze can be generated, so beginners can lock out the fish & concentrate on the centipede

without molestation from other sources. The voices are good, although somewhat unenthused, & it's a blast for young kids (I was playing this when I was about eight).

More or less, this is a great derivative of *Pac-Man*, & later rounds will make you feel REALLY good after eating the centipede. For a change, you get to laugh at the victories rather than the CPU laughing at you, as the cart is quite sympathetic. While not nearly as good as *Super Pac-Man*, it's still an intense way to play a muncher. I can't really see a reason to buy it if you've got *Ms. Pac-Man* for the NES or Genesis, but if you want something original and the graphics don't bother you, it's worth looking into.


-Jess Ragan

MAGIC SWORD
CAPCOM, FOR SUPER NINTENDO

ELEMENT	JR	JS	KY	BS	LN	KO	HH
GRAPHICS	8	6	7	-	8	-	-
SOUND	8	7	7	-	8	-	-
GAMEPLAY	5	5	6	-	4	-	-
OVERALL	6	5	6	-	6	-	-

In Drockmaar Keep, no one can hear you scream; but if they could, it would sound like this: "AAAaaargh! It's the same thing over & over again! I was doing the same thing 43 rounds ago!!! Isn't there anything original in this thing?! Hellllllp!!!"

In this, the conversion of the quarter-starved arcade game, you are a barbarian set to the task of crushing the lethal pearl BlackOrb, which contains an evil oracle with immense persuasive prowess. Just how persuasive, you ask? Enough to send anything & everything, from giants & mummies to unsentient
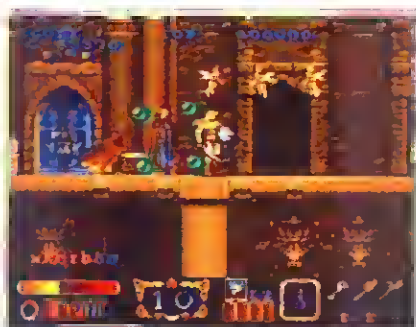
OVER AND OVER AND OVER

beasts like wolves and bears, to sink their teeth, talons, etc. into your tasty flesh. Luckily, you have a shiny sword & a tireless stabbing arm which dispatches all of your foes (except bosses) with ease. There's also the treasure chests which hold keys or coins. The coins are simply for point purposes, while the keys free evil goos like skeletons or great good guys like the Big Man, an ogre with a killer axe, & the Ninja, an out-of-place character who slings shuriken from Sarasota to San Francisco. Shattering the BlackOrb (presumably, by tossing it from the 50th floor) will free the world from its unwanted infatuation from the orb, although its freedom isn't necessarily guaranteed.....

"Wow, this sounds great", you respond. "What's the gripe about this?" Here's just a few. First, it's so hollow, you'd think *James Pond* was utterly Shakespearean in comparison! The play is sloppy in not just the control but the AI level & character placement as well. The enemies are rather lame, as they aren't in the best places & they're not too bright. Usually, they just come after you! Come on! The physics aren't realistic, either - the gravity is rather foul, as the characters swerve in a jump with the convincingness of a Bill Clinton speech. Here's another - the repetitiveness! No matter where you are, you hop the same platforms, bash the same bosses, & traverse the indentical underanimated passages. OK, one more; the above defined animation problems. There's too few animation frames for the enemies, especially the bosses. Whoa!

All's not well with this castle of blunders. "Keep" that in mind, for *Magic Sword* is a lot of pretty pictures with not a lot of playability. The slowdown only compounds this game's many flaws. It's some of the worst ever on a video game - six measly coins which just spin are enough to activate it. It's a nice rental, but own it? That's one castle I'd prefer to stay out of!

- Jess Ragan

ROAD RASH
ELECTRONIC ARTS, FOR GENESIS

ELEMENT	RP	JS	KY	BS	LN	KO	HH
GRAPHICS	?	9	9	9	8	9	10
SOUND	?	7	8	7	8	8	9
GAMEPLAY	?	10	9	10	9	9	10
OVERALL	**?**	**9**	**9**	**9**	**9**	**9**	**10**

Okay, so *Road Rash* is a fun game, and deserves all the good reviews that it's gotten.

So why does it piss me off so much?

Reviewers have remarked about the great graphics and scrolling. Well, yeah, until the first time you ram a car obscured from sight by your own bike and rider, or one the game simply neglected to show coming from the distance.

Some reviewers enjoyed the music and "realistic" sound effects. Bah! Not I. Way too annoying. Turn the music off, turn the volume down all the way, and put on something enjoyable (Sepultura works for me.)

And reviewers gushed over the gameplay. I did, too, until level 4. I mean, levels 1 and 2 were easy, after some practice, and level 3 was a worthy challenge, but after playing level 4 for so long, I'm not sure I want to see level 5.

RUSS AND "RASH": NO WAY!

You see, I'm sick of watching my bike slide the maximum distance away from me when I crash (has anyone else noticed how the game is seemingly programmed to do this for anything but a head-on collision?). I'm sick of watching my bike trip over air molecules on seemingly harmless curves and even occasionally a straightaway. I'm sick of the indecision of "should I steer onto the road and wipe out, not steer and smack a tree, or hit the brakes and just plain tip over?" I'm sick of the way opponents gain a mysterious lead on every hill, or how they can switch lanes perfectly on curves when the game pushes me directly into the oncoming car. And I'm sick of thinking that it's entirely my fault that I can't do better than a 7th place finish at Redwood Forest.

Look, I'm an old-timer, almost a quarter of a century old, and maybe I haven't quite caught up with the new way of gaming, or them damn control pads. Maybe my

reflexes aren't what they used to be, and my contacts don't allow me to stare fixedly at the screen for a whole course.

But there's no way I'm THAT bad. *Road Rash* is too frustrating to play for more than a half an hour anymore. I've never sworn so loudly at a game before, or as vehemently. I've never felt like a game was cheating like this one. Aaargh! I HATE THIS GAME!

And yes, I'm looking forward to *Road Rash 2*.

- Russ Perry, Jr.

SUPER SOCCER
HUMAN, INC., FOR SUPER NINTENDO

ELEMENT	JC	JS	KY	BS	LN	KO	HH
GRAPHICS	9	8	-	-	8	-	-
SOUND	7	7	-	-	6	-	-
GAMEPLAY	8	7	-	-	5	-	-
OVERALL	8	7	-	-	6	-	-

Though *Super Soccer* has been on store shelves for several months, most of the major video mags have not seen fit to review it. That's a crime, because *Super Soccer* towers above all the video soccer simulations I've played during the last eleven years.

What distinguishes this cart is the visual perspective. Unlike other simulations, which show the action from the side as they scroll left to right, *Super Soccer* puts you behind a zoom lens located on one of the endlines. In a tour de force of SNES scaling, the camera follows from behind your players as they charge toward you. The overall effect creates a tremendous sense of immediacy and really puts you in the game.

Game play is excellent. On defense, booters can opt for the slide tackle or, my favorite, the brutally violent shoulder tackle. The latter will sometimes result in a warning card

SUPER SOCCER: CLASSIC SPORTS

or even an ejection. On offense, players pass or shoot through a variety of grounders, long looping vollies, low liners, headers, and even banana kicks. Most importantly, all this is accomplished without the

needless complications that bog down so many sports titles. This cart is essentially an arcade game; you will not spend hours wading through strategy manuals or fumbling around with complicated button manipulations.

The cart offers opposition from sixteen different teams of varying skill from around the world, and differing strategies are required to beat the various teams. The game even includes some hilarious surprises should you win the World Cup.

Super Soccer is not without some significant flaws. Unlike real soccer, it is actually a disadvantage to execute a series of deft passes to free a man ten yards in front of the goal. The keeper will almost always block your point-blank shot. Against most teams, you can score simply by racing toward the net and launching a 45 yard shot toward the post. It is almost impossible to control headers or to score off of corner kicks. And every sports game should offer you the option of calling up an instant replay - *Super Soccer* does not.

With a little more work, this could have been the ultimate soccer game. Right now, it's the best we have, and highly recommended. I hope they release a sequel.

TIP: When learning the game, play as Germany. On all teams, #7 has a great shot - at the options screen, move #7 from the midfield to the forward line. To win the World Cup, you will have to master the low liner shot.
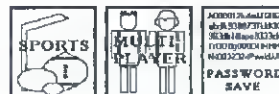
- Jeff Cooper

Q*BERT 3
NTVIC, FOR SUPER NINTENDO

ELEMENT	RS	JS	KY	BS	LN	KO	HH
GRAPHICS	10	-	-	8	-	-	10
SOUND	9	-	-	9	-	-	10
GAMEPLAY	8	-	-	7	-	-	8
OVERALL	9	-	-	8	-	-	9

As the manual begins, "Just when you thought it was safe to go hopping around on a pyramid...." Like *Ms. Pac-Man*, *Ultimate Qix*, and *Space Invaders '91*, another video classic has been resurrected for a new generation of 16-bit gamers. Tired of scroll-and-boss? Our old orange friend is back, complete with the bike-horn nose and eyes on one side of his face. The usual

unfriendly assortment of critters also return, including the old acquaintances Coily, Ugg, and Wrong Way. They've enlisted some new adversaries too: the pesky Frogg and his sidekick Beacon, the most annoying pellet gun in video history.

Unlike previous classic remakes, *Q*Bert 3* does not include new power-ups and boss creatures that only detract from the game. Nonetheless, the designers have improved upon the original in a number of wonderful ways. My main gripe with other 16-bit translations of classic games has been that the joypad simply does not work on games designed for joysticks. *Q*Bert 3*'s options screen lets you configure the joypad in four different ways to let you decide which position is most comfortable.

Other differences appear in areas that make the most sense for a 16-bit update: graphics and sound. the graphics are stunning - you have to see them to believe them. The wildly colorful backgrounds, at times reminiscent of the 1960's psychedelic art that I collect, include some of the most imaginative graphics of any game I've seen. Now we know what Timothy Leary has been up to all these years! And the playfields are no longer just boring pyramids of blocks. Now *Q*Bert* bounces on slices of watermelon, luggage, dice, and a reverse pyramid full of huge teeth, in which the noser must plant cavities in order to clear. The playfields assume different shapes, including one where three pyramids are suspended in mid-air: you must use flying disks to travel from one to the other. In all, there are over 100 different screens, some of which are extraordinarily difficult. I can't wait for some cheater codes so I can look at the advanced levels! And don't turn the music down, either. I haven't heard music this good since *Marble Madness*.

Q*Bert was never a favorite of mine in the arcades or on the home systems until now. I consider *Q*Bert 3* a "must-have" for SNES owners, especially those who have an appreciation for time-honored classic games.

TIP: Coily is dumber than he was in earlier incarnations of the game, and can be blindly led around the maze while clearing. Also, watch out for valuable fruits and green Freeze Balls.

- Rebecca Streets

DIGITAL PRESS PRODUCTS!

VIDEO FANZINE #9

Want to see this edition IN YOUR FACE? On video #9, Random Reviews, a Starpath Supercharger preview, and more Closet Classics in action are shown. We're using Mario Paint for the intermissions and although you still can't see us, we've dubbed our voices in to add "color commentary" to the games as you watch. A bargain at double this price! Approx. 70 mins. $8.00. *Also available: Digital Press Video #5, #6, #7, #8.*

ATARI 7800 VIDEO REVIEW ***NEW***

It's hard to beat the overall quality of this system's games, and this video shows you why. Over 50 of the Atari 7800's games are reviewed here, with Kevin and Joe giving their personal (yet definitive) insights into each one (2-3 mins. each). Approx. 120 mins. $8.00.

ATARI 5200 VIDEO REVIEW

If ever there was a comprehensive look at 5200 software, it has to be here. 65 games are shown on the tape (2-3 mins. each). Approx. 120 mins. $8.00.

COLECOVISION VIDEO REVIEW

With the Atari 5200 video so hot, we had to show off the competition! Lots of games (over 50!) are shown here as well. Approx. 120 mins. $8.00

CHECKLIST CENTRAL MASTER

Can't wait for "Checklist Central" to get to your favorite system (or want everything in one neat little package)? Our "master" list contains complete software lists for Arcadia 2001, Astrocade, Atari 2600, 5200, 7800, ColecoVision, Channel F, Intellivision, Odyssey2, and Vectrex! 14 pages. Highlights recommended software. $1.50.

CHEATER'S COMPENDIUM

"Easter eggs", passwords, and winning tips can be found every month by skimming through magazines, but the Cheater's Compendium has them all in one place! Mostly new games with some oldies sprinkled in, the Compendium is updated quarterly. Version 3 (September 30, 1992) is currently available. 16 pages. $1.50.

To order, send check, money order, or cash (we're easy) to DIGITAL PRESS PRODUCTS, 44 Hunter

Place, Pompton Lakes, NJ 07442-2037. Make checks payable to Joe Santulli, if you'd be so kind. Thank you.
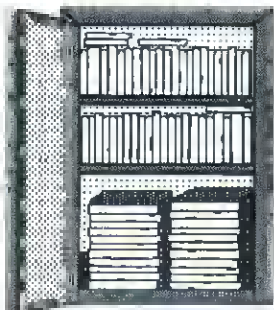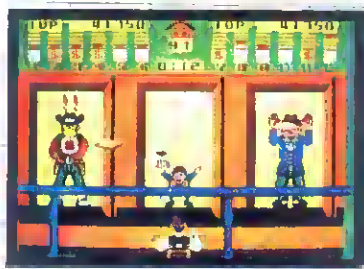
CLOSET CLASSICS

by the fans

Here are this issue's entries in the "sleeper" category: those games that received little attention despite the hours of enjoyment we've had with them:

1. Alisia Dragoon by Sega (for Genesis) - How on this dimension could the best Genesis game in 1992 double as one of the least played games of the year? *Alisia Dragoon* is a spectacular effort by computer programmers GameArts & yet Sega didn't bother with an advertising blitz (which they had used for games like *Joe Montana '93* & *Fatal Labyrinth*, which, by the way, aren't nearly as good) for it. Why? This game is utterly amazing! The graphics & sound are both better than most Genesis games' (in fact, they're almost SNES quality) while the animation & attention to detail is simply awe-inspiring. The areas are realistic, making you feel that you're really there battling the enemy, and the play is appealing, & oddly enough original, as you must count on the most opportune times rather than aiming for your enemies

Just because Sega ignores their creation doesn't mean you have to! This is one title you shouldn't miss - it's price is even lower, making it the no-excuses title to have this year. (Jess Ragan)

2. Bank Panic (Sega, for Master System) - *Bank Panic* is a Sega card game that was passed up when Tonka was calling the shots. Too bad, because this is a fine game. You control HERO, a quick-draw artist who can shoot 2

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or 3 people at one time, protecting customers depositing money at the bank. With music reminiscent of ColecoVision, and gameplay that tests your judgement, reflexes, and speed, *Bank Panic* is a diamond in the rough. (Edward Villalpando)

3. The Texas Chainsaw Massacre (Wizard Video, for Atari 2600) - The former programmers at Wizard Video are in serious nee of some intense mental help! In *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* you are "Leatherface" from the movie of the same title and it appears some people are trespassing on your property. Being a homicidal maniac your most natural reaction to these intruders is to fire up the 'ol chainsaw and go out and make a mess of them. There are a few things inbetween you and your "prey" such as skeletons (naturally), tumbleweeds, and fences which you must avoid or be forced to cut them out of the way wasting precious gas. Wip out as many women and children as possible with the fuel in your chainsaw and move on to the next level where you'll find things are moving a little faster and there are even more people for your hacking pleasure. The scariest part of this game is that I actually find myself enjoying it. Not the premise of course, but it was programmed half-way decently and it's pretty tough to play. (Sean Kelly)

4. Dragonstomper (Starpath, for Atari 2600) - It's nothing short of amazing what Starpath was able to do with the 2600 by the addition of their Supercharger module and *Dragonstomper* is an excellent example of the power of the peripheral! The game is so invovled that it has to be loaded in three sections because it needs three times more memory than the 2600 can provide. In the game we have the standard evil wizard that tries to take over the kingdom by feeding a dragon a potion that would make him obey the wizard's every command. Naturally the wizard screws up and spills the potion on the dragon's claw which makes the dragon intelligent AND evil. It's your job to rid the kingdom of the evil dragon. Forget about *Adventure* as being the classic 2600 adventure game - check out *Dragonstomper*! (Sean Kelly)

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE GCE VECTREX
by Al Backiel

What if Milton Bradley had not bought out GCE? Would the Vectrex still be alive today?

In the autumn of 1982, GCE, a company known for its video game watches, surprised everyone by introducing the Vectrex system. This stand alone monitor used vector graphics unlike the raster which was popular at that time. To top that off, the Vectrex came with an excellent built-in game - *Mine Storm*. An additional 12 games were available initially.

Milton Bradley bought GCE shortly after the end of 1982 for the sole purpose of getting in on the videogame revolution. GCE was allowed to continue as an independently run subsidiary. During January 1983, six more games were shown at the winter CES, these games had to have been started before the takeover. The majority of titles were not even influenced by Milton Bradley. At about this time (early 1983), the first sign of the videogame shakeout to come occurred with the bankruptcy of Apollo Games.

Milton Bradley had good intentions but they made the big mistake of stockpiling the Vectrex system for a national roll-out. The $200 unit was then dropped to $170, then $150, $100. Finally, since the monitor was so expensive to make, it was losing money. With losses over $31 million, they pulled the plug in early 1984. The Vectrex was then sold out to discounters and went for as low as $45. The carts went for $5 each. Many people were introduced to this classic game system at this time because it was such a terrific deal.

To their credit, the Milton Bradley era did produce a few additional games and brought about many exciting peripherals like the light pen and the 3D glasses. There was even work being done on a computer keyboard. Unfortunately, they did not get a chance to release the games that must have been near completion when the bottom fell out.

Would GCE have been able to survive on their own? Quite possibly, they would not have taken the chances Milton Bradley did. But, unlike other companies, they had no third party software. This in one instance where I believe it would have helped matters. A more conservative marketing approach might have enabled them to make a comeback, like Atari was able to do. At any rate, most of the games were fast and of arcade quality. The Vectrex is a true classic system.

HISTORY POP QUIZ: Deja Vu
by Russ Perry Jr.

Going on the premise that there is nothing original in the world, let's play a game of "Then & Now". I'll list a modern "innovation", and you supply the similar product from the "old days" (products may not have been released).

INNOVATION	OLD DAYS
1. NES R.O.B.	_____
2. NES Power Pad	_____
3. Super Mario Paint	_____
4. TeleGenesis Modem	_____
5. SMS 3D Glasses	_____
6. Electronic Arts/SMSG	_____
7. SMS vs. NES bickering	_____
8. SNES vs. Genesis bickering	_____

9. Gameboy   _____

10. MMC's   _____

11. Lawsuits ad nauseum   _____

ANSWERS

Look after the classifieds.

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QUIZ ANSWERS

1) Androbots. 2) Exus Foot Craz (for Atari 2600). 3) Bally Scribbling or Channel F Doodle or Vectrex Artmaster. 4) GameLine Master Module. 5) Vectrex 3D Imager. 6) Intellivision Play-Cable. 7) 2600 vs. Intellivision bickering. 8) ColecoVision vs. 5200 bickering. 9) Microvision. 10) Bank switching or RAM-PLUS (CBS, for Atari 2600). 11) Lawsuits ed nauseum - some things never change!

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